

**REMARKS**

The following comments are made in response to the Office Action dated January 25, 2005.

Applicants have amended claim 1 without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1, 30, and 52-65 are presently pending. The specification has been amended.

Claims 1, 30, 52, 54, 56-59, 61, and 63-65 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,639,250 to Neef et al. (Neef et al.). Claims 53, 55, 60 and 62 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Neef et al.

The disclosure is objected to for a minor informality.

The specification has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. It is noted that the U.S. patent number for the prior application had not been assigned at the time the present patent application was filed.

Applicants traverse the rejection under Section 102(e). Independent claim 1 recites a modular insulative connector housing having first and second end pieces including first and second hold-down tabs, respectively, for mounting said insulative connector housing to a substrate. Neef et al. fails to disclose such hold-down tabs. The Examiner refers to pegs 36 of Neef et al. as hold-down tabs. The pegs 36 of Neef et al. are similar to posts 138, 148 of Fig. 6 of the present application. The pegs 36 are not hold-down tabs.

Claim 1 further recites that “the first hold-down tab extends laterally from a side of the first end piece and the second hold-down tab extends laterally from a side of the second end piece, wherein the location of the first hold-down tab is staggered relative to the location of the second hold-down tab.” As above, Neef et al. fails to show this feature of independent claim 1. For at least these reasons, the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 30 recites a female connector comprising a female connector housing and a plurality of female contact pins held in said female connector housing. The female connector housing has first and second end pieces with first and second staggered mounting extensions, respectively, for mounting said female connector housing to a side of a second substrate. For example, Figs 15A-15C show an exemplary arrangement in which the hold-down

tabs are staggered, with the left hold-down tab proximal the front of the connector housing and the right hold-down tab proximal the back of the connector housing.

Neef et al. fails to teach or suggest the staggered mounting extensions as recited in independent claim 30. The Office Action seems to suggest that the pegs 36 are the mounting extensions. Nothing in Neef et al. teaches or suggests staggered mounting extensions. At least for this reason, the rejection of claim 30 should be withdrawn.


Each of dependent claims 52-65 depends from either independent claim 1 or 30. The rejection of these dependent claims should be withdrawn at least for the reasons provided above with respect to independent claims 1 and 30.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 136 not accounted for above, such extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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